DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 855 CS 009 988

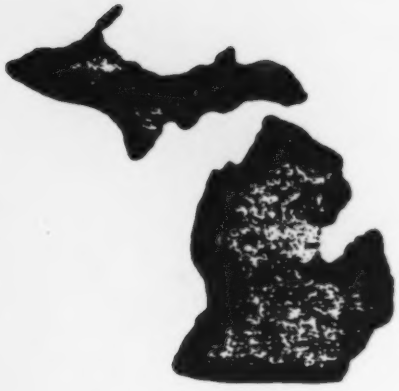
AUTHOR	Buffone, Joan; Potter, Sheila
TITLE	Literacy: The Real Bottom Line.
INSTITUTION	Michigan State Board of Education, Lansing.
PUB DATE	88
NOTE	64p.; The State of Reading: Reading Professional Development Leadership Series. Some illustrations may not reproduce well.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Functional Literacy; Labor Force; *Literacy Education; *Reading Skills; School Districts; *Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	*Michigan; Training Materials; Training Needs

ABSTRACT

Intended for administrators, curriculum directors, teachers, school board members, and representatives of local industry in Michigan, this module was designed to create awareness of the disparity between the demands of the workplace and literacy instruction in the schools, and to encourage school districts to develop new indices for assessing the degree to which graduates are prepared for the workforce. The purposes of the training module are: (1) to review the concept of literacy from its historical definition to its evolving meaning; (2) to examine the literacy performance of school children and young adults on national assessments; (3) to create awareness of the disparity between the demands of literacy in the workplace versus the schoolplace; and (4) to encourage local school districts to respond to the literacy reports. A nine-item annotated bibliography is included. (MG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED316855



THE STATE OF READING:

Reading Professional Development Leadership Series

Michigan State Board of Education
Reading Curriculum Review Committee

LITERACY: The Real Bottom Line

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. T. PASLOV

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Written by:

Joan Buffone
Sheila Potter

Edited for Content by:
Dr. Elaine Weber

CS009988

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LITERACY – THE REAL BOTTOM LINE

MODULE SUMMARY:

While much attention is being focused on current reading research, and efforts are being made to revise how we assess reading, the "real" bottom line is literacy.

National studies indicate that nearly all of our children and young adults have attained rudimentary and basic reading levels, but only few have acquired the reasoning skills and advanced literacy levels necessary for functioning in today's society. This module is designed to create awareness of the disparity between the demands of the workplace and literacy instruction in the schools, and to encourage school districts to develop new indices for assessing the degree to which graduates are prepared for the workforce.

INTENDED AUDIENCE:

Administrators, curriculum directors, teachers, school board members, and representatives of local industry.

MODULE

LITERACY – THE REAL BOTTOM LINE

The purposes of this training module are:

1. To review the concept of literacy from its historical definition to its evolving meaning.

2. To examine the literacy performance of school children and young adults on national assessments.

3. To create awareness of the disparity between the demands of literacy in the workplace vs. the schoolplace.

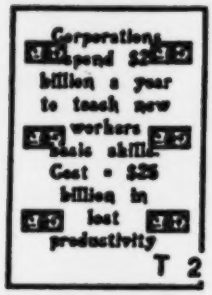
4. To encourage local school districts to respond to the literacy reports.

T 1

[Comment on cartoon; comment on responsibility; comment on this individual's problem.]

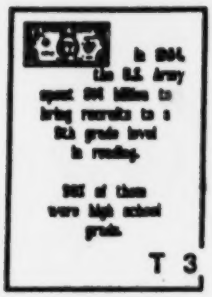
Literacy is a problem in our society.

Cartoonists are aware of it.



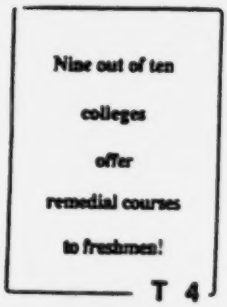
T 2

Industry is certainly aware of it and is spending billions to address it.



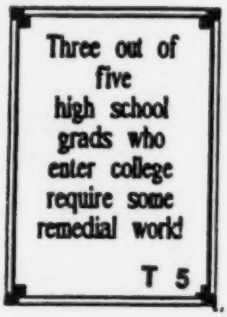
T 3

The armed forces are aware of it as they train high school graduates in skills that help them achieve a ninth grade reading level.

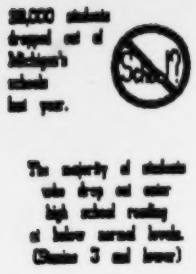


T 4

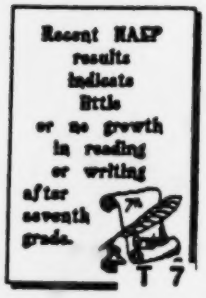
Higher education is aware of it and has had to institute remedial programs for freshmen.



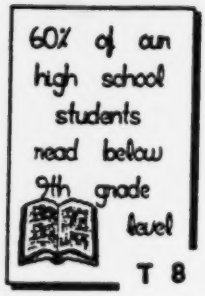
T 5


[illegible] students dropped out of Michigan's schools last year.
The majority of students who drop out enter high school reading at below normal levels. (Grades 3 and lower)

T 6



T 7



T 8

Secondary and adult education is aware of it as the number of high school dropouts rises and the need for basic completion programs grows.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports alert us to literacy problems in our schools through the series of reading, writing, and young adult literacy reports that have been released in the last three years.

Literacy certainly seems to be a major concern in many segments of our society.

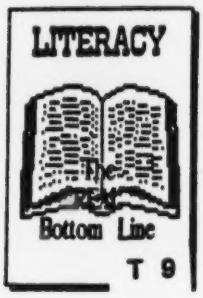
Why is it that our young people are unprepared for the workplace, for service in the armed forces, and for higher education?

. . . and WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?

We know that there are many factors contributing to the literacy problems you've seen described here, factors beyond our control--a decreasing and dramatically changing youth population and society's expectations.

We know that the demands of our society are increasing rapidly, too rapidly for most of us. For example, the home computer you learned to operate yesterday is obsolete today.

What is our role as educators in tackling this potentially debilitating condition?



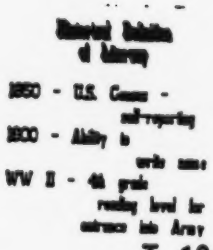
Our purpose today is to examine the issue of literacy. . .

and to consider just what the reports may be suggesting to the educational community.

LITERACY IS THE BOTTOM LINE when we discuss educating our children!

LITERACY -- WHAT IS IT?

[Using the timeline, discuss how the concept of literacy has changed since the 1800's. Point out the evolving nature of "literacy" and how the demands of literacy keep rising.]



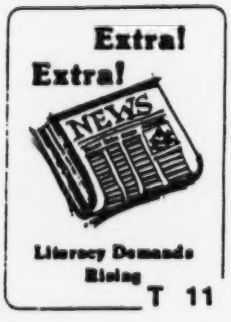
Let's look at how our concept of literacy has evolved in the last 100 or more years.

In the U.S. Census of 1850, census takers merely asked people if they could read and write. We have progressed from a time when a literate person was one who could read and write his or her name.

We come from a time when a 4th grade reading level was adequate for acceptance into the army in WW II.

We have moved from an agrarian society. . .
to an industrial age. . .
and now to a technological and informational age.

Along with these changes the literacy demands in society have increased dramatically.



Literacy & The Newspaper

Consider the daily newspaper which has long been considered to be an informal index of basic literacy.

--Newspapers were once written at a 5th-6th grade level.

--However, newspapers of the 1980's are written at a 9th-12th grade level.

If this surprises you, take a look at the front page or Section A of any major newspaper.

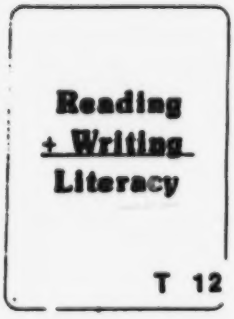
Several studies show that human interest stories are frequently written at approximately a 9th grade level; while the informational/technical articles are written at approximately an 11th grade level.

[To emphasize this point, use examples of both types of stories from recent newspapers. Compare local and syndicated wire service articles; compare articles from local and national newspapers.]

Definition of Literacy

Just What Does Literacy Mean Today?

[Ask audience to think about their understanding of the concept of "literacy." Ask them to consider what might be some examples of the behaviors of a LITERATE child or adult. Give examples of some possible behaviors.]

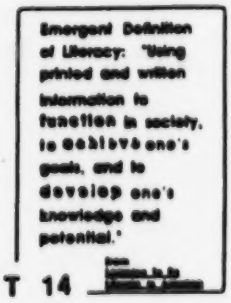


T 12

T 13

[Discuss the NAEP definition of literacy.]

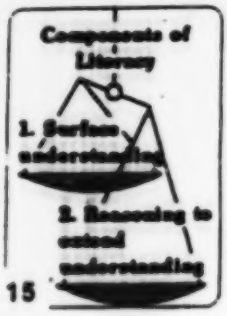
When the National Assessment of Educational Progress researchers set out to examine the literacy performance of children and young adults, they knew that literacy was more than reading and writing, or reading plus writing.


Emergent Definition of Literacy: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential."
T 14

They provided a definition that considered literacy in the context of daily living. While the FUNCTIONAL skills were included, they added the humanistic aspect of literacy--the need to ACHIEVE one's goals, and to DEVELOP one's knowledge and potential.

Literacy, therefore, is the ability to use print for personal and social ends. (THE SUBTLE DANGER, p. 5)

The NAEP summary report, BECOMING LITERATE IN AMERICA, offers an operational definition of literacy that has two components or processes:



T 15

1. the ability to derive surface understanding from written materials and to express similar understanding in writing;

2. the ability to reason effectively about what one reads and writes in order to extend one's understanding of the ideas expressed.

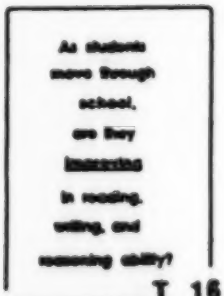
The key difference in this explanation of literacy is the attention given to reasoning ability.

It is, perhaps, this reasoning ability that is also so important in ACHIEVING one's goals, and DEVELOPING one's knowledge and potential.

Today, as we reflect on how we define literacy in our schools, we need to keep in mind that our goal is to educate youngsters who can continue to learn, who can reason effectively and independently, and who are able to achieve their goals.

IS OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, AS WE KNOW IT, PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY SKILLS AS WE HAVE DEFINED THEM THUS FAR?

<u>What Students Can Do</u>



T 16

T 17

Let's look at how our young people, the products of our schools, are doing on the national assessments in reading, writing, and adult literacy.

The summary of the NAEP reports called LEARNING TO BE LITERATE IN AMERICA asked this question:

Are students learning to read and write better as they move through school?

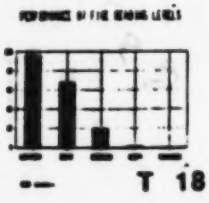
The answer to this question regarding reading was as follows:

Recent assessment results indicate that basic literacy rates have never been higher. Our young people are successful in reading at a surface level and in performing routine, uncomplicated tasks.

However, THEY DO NOT HAVE THE REASONING SKILLS NECESSARY TO PERFORM TASKS THAT MAY REQUIRE SEVERAL STEPS, INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE, OR ANSWER QUESTIONS THAT ARE EMBEDDED IN COMPLEX TEXT.

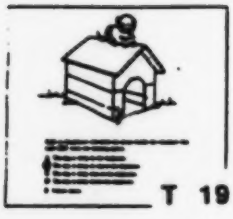
THE READING REPORT CARD, the first of several NAEP reports issued in 1985, traced the progress of our nation's young people in reading performance from 1971 to 1984.

Five categories of reading skills were used in the evaluation.



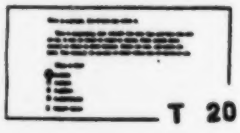
T 18

As you can see from this bar graph, the vast majority (93.9%) of nine-year-olds or fourth grade students have achieved RUDIMENTARY reading skills.



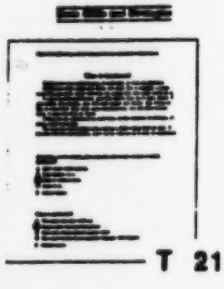
T 19

Let's take a look at an example of a RUDIMENTARY reading skill level item:



T 20

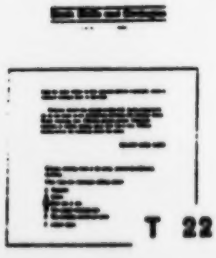
These tasks require children to follow simple directions or to read a few simple sentences and answer factual question.



T 21

While only 6% of fourth graders were unable to complete these tasks, we must realize that these are children who are AT RISK for future school failure. Six percent of this age group represents approximately 184,000 nine-year-olds!

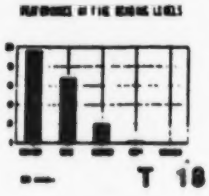
This is an example of a reading task at BASIC level. These tasks assessed basic comprehension strategies based on simple stories and expository (informational) passages.



T 22

Only 64.2% of fourth grade students were able to successfully complete reading tasks such as this one.

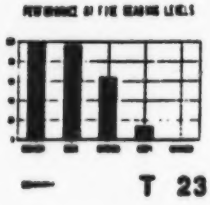
This means that 36%, over one-third, of nine-year-olds were unable to respond correctly to tasks such as this one.



[Put bar graph of fourth grade achievement levels back on screen.]

As you can see, only 18.1% of nine-year-olds have achieved an INTERMEDIATE reading proficiency level. . .

and only 1% have achieved an ADEPT level.

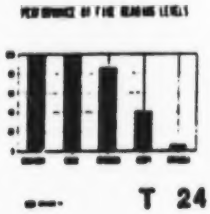


Are our eighth graders doing better?

From this chart you can see that 99.8% have achieved at a RUDIMENTARY level, and 94.5% have achieved at a BASIC level.

However, only 60.3% have achieved at an INTERMEDIATE level.
Reading materials in this level were more lengthy stories and informational passages (400 words). The questions required that the reader search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations--tasks students frequently encounter in an eighth grade textbook.

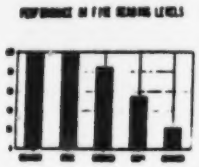
While this sample may not seem to be particularly difficult for 13-year-olds, 40% of students were unable to adequately answer the four questions that followed.



When we look at how well our 17-year-olds do, we see that 83.6% read successfully at the INTERMEDIATE level.

Again, there is a dramatic drop in the number achieving at the next level called ADEPT. This level required the reader to find, understand, summarize, and explain relatively complicated information.

Only 39.2% of eleventh graders read proficiently at that level.



T 25

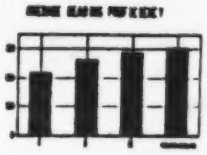
When we examine the trends in reading performance of young adults, a sampling of 21 to 26-year-olds, we see the same decline in the development of reading skills.

While 100% achieved RUDIMENTARY level, and 97% achieved at a BASIC level, only 84% reached an INTERMEDIATE level of proficiency.

A sharp decline to 40% occurs at the ADEPT level. This means that 60% of young adults could not deal with complicated literary and informational material such as that which is encountered in a high school text.

Only 21% of young adults performed at an ADVANCED level and were able to read text similar to that found in college, professional, and technical working environments.

Such tasks require the ability to reason effectively about what is read--and few young adults were able to do so.



T 26

Clearly, there is a developmental trend in the average reading proficiency of the age groups.

What we must question, however, is whether we need to be concerned about the inability of most of our young people to advance to higher levels of reading proficiency.

If the demands of our society are rising, and the reading performance of our youngsters is not improving commensurately, we may be faced with a critical literacy problem in the future.

The BECOMING A NATION OF READERS report tells us that

"The world is moving into a technological-information age in which full participation in education, science, business, industry, and the professions requires increasing levels of literacy. WHAT WAS A SATISFACTORY LEVEL OF LITERACY IN 1950 PROBABLY WILL BE MARGINAL BY THE YEAR 2000."

The reports that we have just examined alert us to a potential problem in the area of reading.

In our definition of LITERACY, we include the use of writing, reasoning within writing, and the ability to achieve one's goals through this medium.

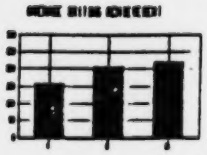
Let's look at the results of THE WRITING REPORT CARD, the 1985 NAEP report that summarized three national assessments of writing achievement conducted from 1974 to 1984.

In these studies, students were asked to complete a variety of writing tasks:

INFORMATIONAL WRITING: select, organize, and present the details of a painting.

PERSUASIVE WRITING: take a stand and support it with some reasons.

IMAGINATIVE WRITING: suggest a situation in which they imagined themselves and reveal their attitudes through descriptions of that situation.



- T 27

The reports tell us that 9-,13-,and 17-year old students performed distressingly poorly on tasks requiring them to write reasoned papers for particular purposes.

--35% of eleventh graders could NOT write an adequate paragraph on a job application describing the kind of job they would like.

--22% of the eleventh graders, 15% of eighth graders, and 4% of fourth graders wrote at the ADEQUATE level or better on a task requiring them to write a letter persuading the school principal to drop an unnecessary rule.

This means that 78% of the eleventh graders, 85% of eighth graders, and 96% of fourth graders wrote at a less than adequate level on this task requiring reasoning and planning of writing.

On tasks requiring students to write in a straightforward way about information they already knew (or could easily understand), students responded at a surface or minimal level.

--Only 67% of eighth graders could write a letter of complaint to a T-shirt company and suggest a

course of action to remedy their problem. Thirty-three percent were unable to do so adequately.

--Only 41% of fourth graders could describe information presented in a brief series of simple pictures. Seventy-nine percent of fourth graders were unsuccessful.

Again, we can see a developmental trend in average writing achievement of our young people.

The NAEP report suggests that American students have learned the fundamentals of writing. Most students write with the surface understanding and skill needed for a minimal level of writing performance.

However, our graduates will not be able to write adequately enough to serve their own needs.

Their writing does not reflect the kind of writing performance required for success in school or at work.

They have not developed the effective reasoning skills required to adequately communicate their ideas in ways that will be understood by others.

If LITERACY IS THE BOTTOM LINE in American education, we need to ask ourselves if we are adequately preparing our young people in both reading and writing to meet the literacy demands of the society.

The authors of LITERACY: PROFILES OF AMERICA'S YOUNG ADULTS conclude that "substantial proportions of our young adult population, and especially our minority population appear to be ill-equipped for the high and increasing literacy challenges associated with being productive and self-sufficient in our society."

These reports should be particularly troublesome to us as educational leaders, as staff development personnel, as teachers of children from the elementary grades through high school.

Expectations of the Workplace/Realities of the Schoolplace

REVIEW: We've examined what abilities children have demonstrated on NAEP assessments of reading and writing, and we've examined what abilities young adults have demonstrated.

We found that children and young adults are capable of carrying out routine and uncomplicated reading and writing tasks.

Let's consider this question:

Is performance of ROUTINE AND UNCOMPLICATED TASKS SUFFICIENT FOR THE WORKPLACE?

Venezky and his colleagues, in THE SUBTLE DANGER, warn us that "the industrial shifts toward high technology manufacturing industries and toward many service-oriented industries have increased the demand for more highly educated workers. (p. 49)

[Discuss trends of the future. . .]

--REDUCTION in the many traditional employment opportunities for the less educated, especially high school dropouts.

Due to the loss of the industrial base, because of robotics and foreign manufacturing, the middle sector jobs which pay high wages for low skills will disappear forever.

[Discuss the auto industry, and subsidiary industries, changes to robotics and the effects on the workforce.]

--75% INCREASE in jobs in the service sector-- These jobs will require intellectual skills of communication and mathematics.

Now let's examine the realities of the schoolplace and ask ourselves:

ARE WE PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE TO CARRY OUT THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE AND IN SOCIETY?

Dr. Larry Mikulecky, of Indiana University, claims that schools are NOT adequately preparing graduates for the literacy demands of work, or, in many cases, higher education.

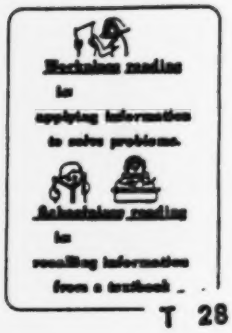
According to Mikulecky:

--School is a good place to AVOID reading and writing.

> Secondary students in urban schools read AT MOST 90 minutes/day (including homework!)

--Literacy demands actually INCREASE after high school.

> 90% of jobs (retail, service, clerical, professional & technical occupations) require literacy skills
> 2-3 HOURS/DAY
>
> Blue collar workers = 1 1/2 HOURS/DAY



T 28

--The uses to which literacy is put on the job appear to be MORE COMPLEX than typical uses of literacy in schools.

Seventy percent of workplace reading is written at a 10th-12th grade level. As you will recall, only 40% of our high school students function at this level.

Paul A. Pearson, in THE FUTURE OF WORK AND EDUCATION: COLLABORATION FOR SURVIVAL, states that it is precisely in the basic intellectual skills needed in the workplace, even in entry level jobs, that young employees show the greatest deficiencies.

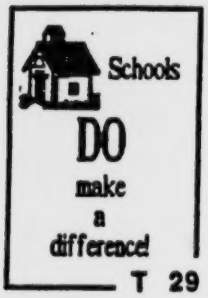
Many lack the ability to:

- Draw correct inferences from written, pictorial or mathematical information
- Understand oral instructions
- Develop alternatives and reach conclusions
- Express ideas intelligibly and effectively

- Apply such basic concepts of economics and profit and cost

WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF THESE REPORTS?

DO WE NEED TO RECONSIDER OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR STUDENTS AND RECONCILE THAT COMMITMENT WITH THE WARNINGS OF THE MANY REPORTS WE HAVE CITED HERE TODAY?



T 29

Schools Make The Difference

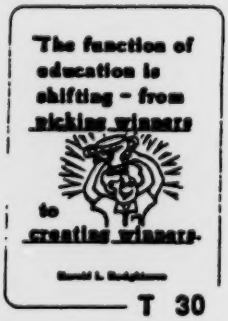
It is evident from the results of the young adult literacy reports that SCHOOLS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE in literacy training.

- The more education students receive, the more literate they are likely to become.
- In the young adult sample, individuals who did not complete high school actually read about the same as eighth grade students in the national sample.
- Those with college degrees performed much better than the young adult sample as a whole.

Nevertheless, the national reports tell us that the majority of children and young adults are performing at a basic and rudimentary level throughout their schooling and in the workplace.

IF SCHOOLS MAKE A DIFFERENCE, WHAT IS IT WE NEED TO DO TO RAISE THE LITERACY LEVELS OF OUR STUDENTS IN ORDER TO PREPARE THEM FOR THE DEMANDS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE WORKPLACE?

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS EDUCATORS?

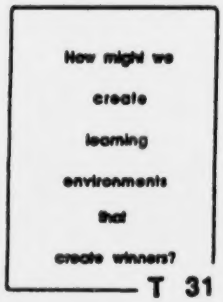


T 30

Pearson, further states, "Public schools must redefine their mission and create learning environments to prepare young people and assist in the learning needs for the life-long learner of the new information/learning society.

Harold Hodgkinson, in MICHIGAN: THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, discusses the need for

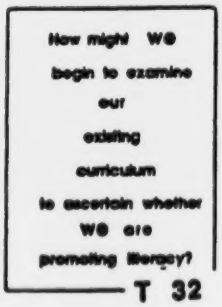
schools to change their function of picking winners to CREATING WINNERS.



In light of our dwindling, but dramatically changing youth population and increasing literacy demands of the workplace, we might begin to consider the following questions about our responsibility now and in the future.

[Display transparencies and read some or all of the follow-up questions for consideration.]

T - HOW MIGHT WE AS EDUCATORS CREATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT CREATE WINNERS?



T - HOW MIGHT WE BEGIN TO EXAMINE OUR EXISTING CURRICULUM TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER WE ARE PROMOTING LITERACY?

- -- What is our district's reading philosophy?
- -- Is it written down?
- -- Has it been revised within the last five years?
- -- Is it used to make decisions about curriculum?
- -- How might we use the demographic data presented today to effect changes in our curriculum?

Sometimes it seems that important data is duly noted and discussed, but seldom used as the basis for instructional change.

T - HOW MIGHT WE DEVELOP NEW AND APPROPRIATE INDICES FOR ASSESSING THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE PRODUCTS OF OUR EXISTING EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM MEET THE LITERACY DEMANDS OF BUSINESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION?

- - What evidence exists for the changing workplace literacy needs in our community?

- - What are the literacy requisites of local colleges, business, and industry?

- - How do these demands correlate with the district's reading philosophy?

- - How well do we prepare our high school graduates for the literacy demands of the workplace and higher education?

T 34

- - Do we know where our graduates are now?

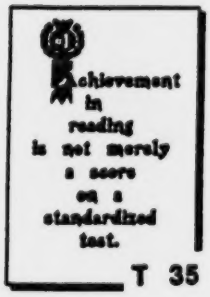
- - What district-wide longitudinal career studies have been conducted on our graduates?

- - What are our current school district expectations of our graduates?

T - What you inspect, you expect and respect.

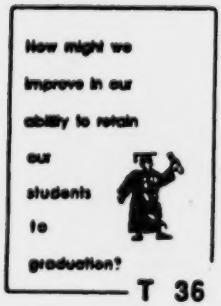
- - Do these indicators reflect students' ability to reason about what they have read and written?

Many districts rely on standardized achievement tests, which do not measure reasoning ability. They attempt to measure how well students master school curriculum.



T 35

T - Achievement in reading is not merely a score on a standardized test.



T 36

T - HOW MIGHT WE PREVENT OUR STUDENTS FROM LEAVING SCHOOL BEFORE GRADUATION?

- - Why is Michigan behind other large states like Ohio and Pennsylvania in dropout prevention?

- - What is our district's dropout rate?

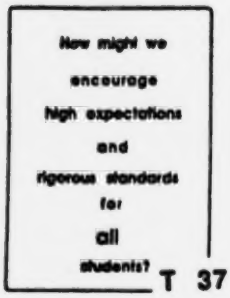
- - Do we know where our dropouts are?

- - <u>How</u> do we identify our "at risk" students?

- - <u>When</u> do we identify them?

- - What intervention and dropout prevention strategies have we developed?

- - How do we address the needs of our potential high school dropouts in our reading programs?



T 37

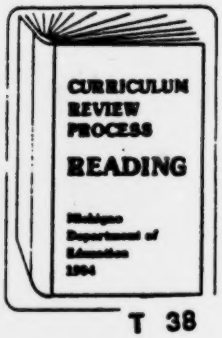
T - HOW MIGHT WE ENCOURAGE HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND RIGOROUS STANDARDS FOR <u>ALL</u> STUDENTS?

- - How do we meet the needs of those with limited and moderately proficient literacy skills?

- - How might we increase the number of students performing at advanced levels of literacy? (currently, only five percent of our students are performing at this level.)

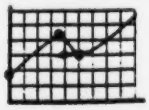
- - How might we make greater efforts to nurture higher-level thinking skills for <u>all</u> students?

- - How might our district's schools facilitate a shift from an information-disseminating model of teaching to an interactive model emphasizing information-processing, critical and creative reasoning, locating and organizing information, and investigating and solving REAL problems?



T 38

Michigan, more than many states, has recognized the need for literacy education and has utilized contemporary research about reading and the learning process to effect decisions about public school curriculum. The Michigan Department of Education Reading Curriculum Review Committee has developed a model for curriculum review. It encourages districts to adopt a philosophy and a set of goals for reading and to create a comprehensive, interactive, district-wide reading program, which is consistent with the philosophy, goals, and revised reading objectives of the state. <u>The Essential Goals and Objectives for Reading Education</u> are a set of standards for students that are



Michigan K - 12
Program Standards
of
Quality

T 39

reflective of a more appropriate definition of literacy, one which includes not only higher-level thinking skills, but also knowledge about the reading process and attitudes about reading.

Assisted by professional associations and local educators, the Michigan Department of Education revised the Michigan K-12 Program Standards of Quality. This document describes the necessary components of a public school curriculum, and it gives direction for the design of a K-12 program in literacy education.

Another document, The Statewide Plan for Reading, was developed by the Reading Curriculum Review Committee to assist educators in providing leadership in their own schools, in order to improve reading instruction throughout Michigan. An important component of the Plan is the "Statewide Professional Development Model for Reading Instruction," which describes knowledge about the reading process and corresponding instructional strategies observable in the classrooms of teachers competent in this knowledge.

School districts in Michigan may wish to consider how they might begin to incorporate these timely resources into their instructional programs.

"We are not a nation of careful readers, nor are we highly competent information processors. In an information age, these deficiencies of young adults should be viewed as particularly troublesome."

T 40 from The Subtle Danger

The issues raised by the assessment results cited here today are serious. The message from THE SUBTLE DANGER is that the results of the NAEP studies indicate that few Americans cannot read at all, yet the studies "carry warnings of a more subtle danger, of a chronic problem, which, if left uncorrected, could slowly gnaw at the very strength of our national existence - the skills and abilities of our citizens."

Richard Venezky warns us that, "We have no crisis to confront, yet the need to act is no less than if there were (a crisis)."

Literacy, beyond the basic ability to read and write, is fundamental to this democracy and to its future economic growth; and this is **THE BOTTOM LINE.**

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Applebee, A.M., Langer, J.A., & Mullis, I. (1987). LEARNING TO BE LITERATE IN AMERICA: READING, WRITING AND REASONING. Princeton, NJ: National Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service.

The authors summarize the results of the three major studies funded by the Office for Educational Research and Improvement. These studies, a series called THE NATION'S REPORT CARD, report on literacy trends during the last decade. The authors report that virtually all of our children and young adults are basically literate. However, they argue that minimum levels of literacy are no longer sufficient for people who must live and work in an increasingly complex and technological society.

Hess, F. (1987, April). A comprehensive analysis of the dropout phenomenon in an urban school system. Paper presented to the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, Chicago, Illinois.

Hess discusses & analyzes the dropout problem in Chicago schools and proposes solutions.

Hirsch, E.D., Jr. (1987). CULTURAL LITERACY. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Hirsch describes a common knowledge that he argues is essential for understanding and making sense of what is read. He calls for a new emphasis on information in American schooling, and outlines a plan for making cultural literacy our educational priority.

Hodgkinson, H.L. (1987, March). MICHIGAN: THE STATE AND ITS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. Washington, DC: The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.

Hodgkinson argues that Michigan has been through an economic crisis, yet the educational system has developed some new strengths during this time. He identifies five crucial issues that the state and the educational system face in the next decade.

Kozol, J. (1985). ILLITERATE AMERICA. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday Inc.

Jonathan Kozol describes the problem of illiteracy in America. His statistics and stories illustrate the economic and human costs of illiteracy. In a call for reform, Kozol proposes a program to conquer illiteracy.

Mikulecky, L. (1986, December). The status of literacy in our society. Paper presented at the National Reading Conference, Austin, Texas.

Mikulecky examines the data from National Assessment of Educational Progress studies released in 1985 and 1986. He discusses changes in literacy trends and demands, and the implications of this information for schools and adult literacy training programs.

Pearson, P. A. (1987, February). THE FUTURE OF WORK AND EDUCATION: COLLABORATION FOR SURVIVAL.

Pearson discusses trends in work demography and population demography as they relate to education in America. He argues that unless business and education form partnerships to deal with these issues, our society, as we know it, is doomed.

Venezky, R.L., Kaestle, D.F., & Sum, A.M. (1987, January). THE SUBTLE DANGER: REFLECTIONS ON THE LITERACY ABILITIES OF AMERICA'S YOUNG ADULTS. (Report No. 16-CAEP-01). Princeton, NJ: Center for the Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service.

The authors of this report analyze the results of the NAEP Young Adult Literacy Assessment. They discuss the implications for the labor market and education, as well as the effects on more general concerns such as citizenship and equality. They conclude that while we may have no crisis to confront, the need to act is no less than if there were.

Weber, E.M. (1987, Summer). Reading standards: The real bottom line is not the MEAP! MICHIGAN READING ASSOCIATION JOURNAL, 20, 2-5.

The author, a reading specialist with the Michigan Department of Education, emphasizes that the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) reading test should not be the force behind change in reading curriculum. Rather, the alarming results of research on the literacy skills of our young people should produce needed instructional change.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION (NAEP)

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

REPORTS

THE READING REPORT CARD: PROGRESS TOWARD EXCELLENCE IN OUR SCHOOLS. TRENDS IN READING OVER FOUR NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS, 1971-1984. National Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service, 1985.
Cost: $9.00

Applebee, A., Langer, J. & Mullis, I. (1986). WRITING TRENDS ACROSS THE DECADE, 1974-84. National Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service.
Cost: $12.50

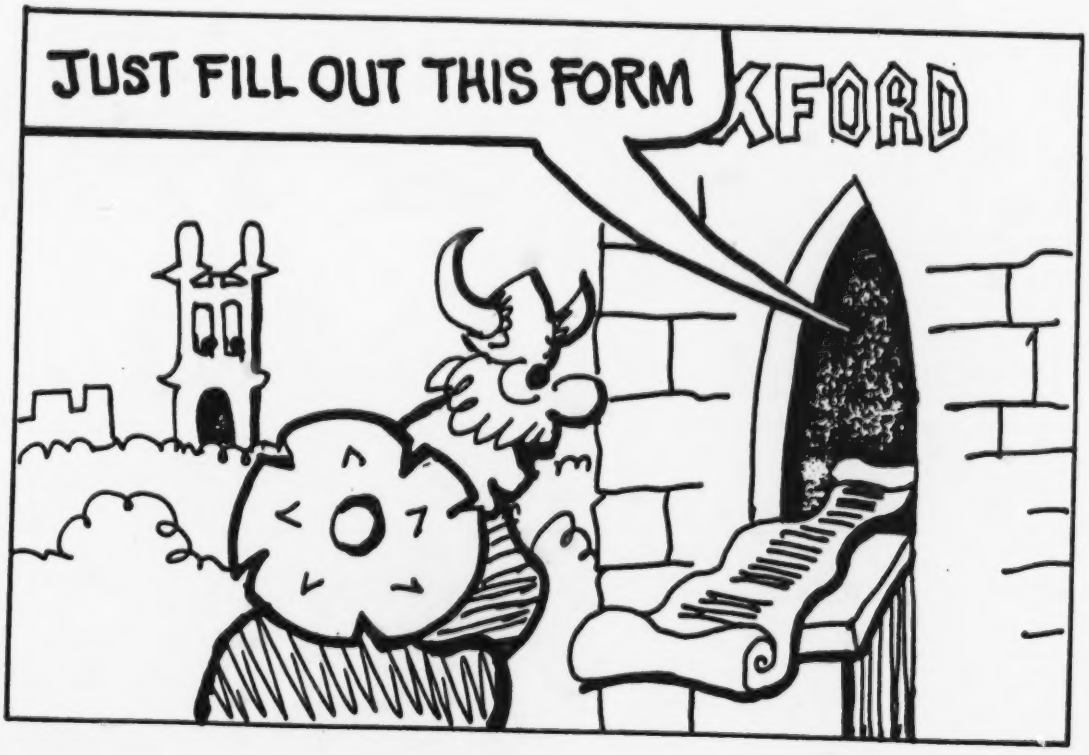
Kirsch, I. & Jungeblut, A. (1986). LITERACY: PROFILES OF AMERICA'S YOUNG ADULTS. National Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service.
Cost: $12.50

Applebee, A., Langer, J. & Mullis, I. (1986) THE WRITING REPORT CARD, WRITING ACHIEVEMENT IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS. National Assessment of Educational Progress, Educational Testing Service.
Cost: $12.50

Reports are available from NAEP
CN 6710
Princeton, NJ 08541-6710

Please include $1.50 for shipping of each report.

COULD YOU TEACH ME TO READ AND TO WRITE?
CERTAINLY!
OXFORD


JUST FILL OUT THIS FORM
XFORD

Corporations spend $2 billion a year to teach new workers basic skills. Cost = $25 billion in lost productivity

T 2

In 1984, the U.S. Army spent $14 billion to bring recruits to a 9th grade level in reading.

90% of them were high school grads.

T 3

Nine out of ten

colleges

offer

remedial courses

to freshmen!

T 4

Three out of five high school grads who enter college require some remedial work!

28,000 students dropped out of Michigan's schools last year.

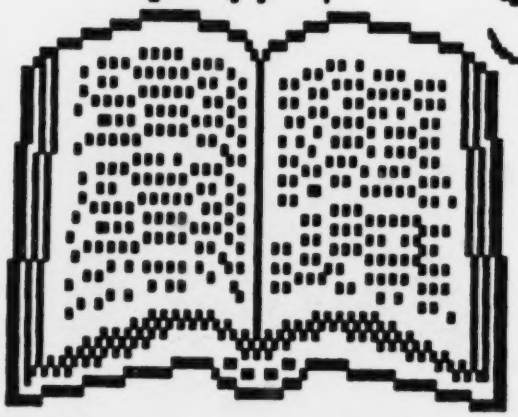
The majority of students who drop out enter high school reading at below normal levels. (Stanine 3 and lower)

T 6

Recent NAEP results indicate little or no growth in reading or writing after seventh grade.

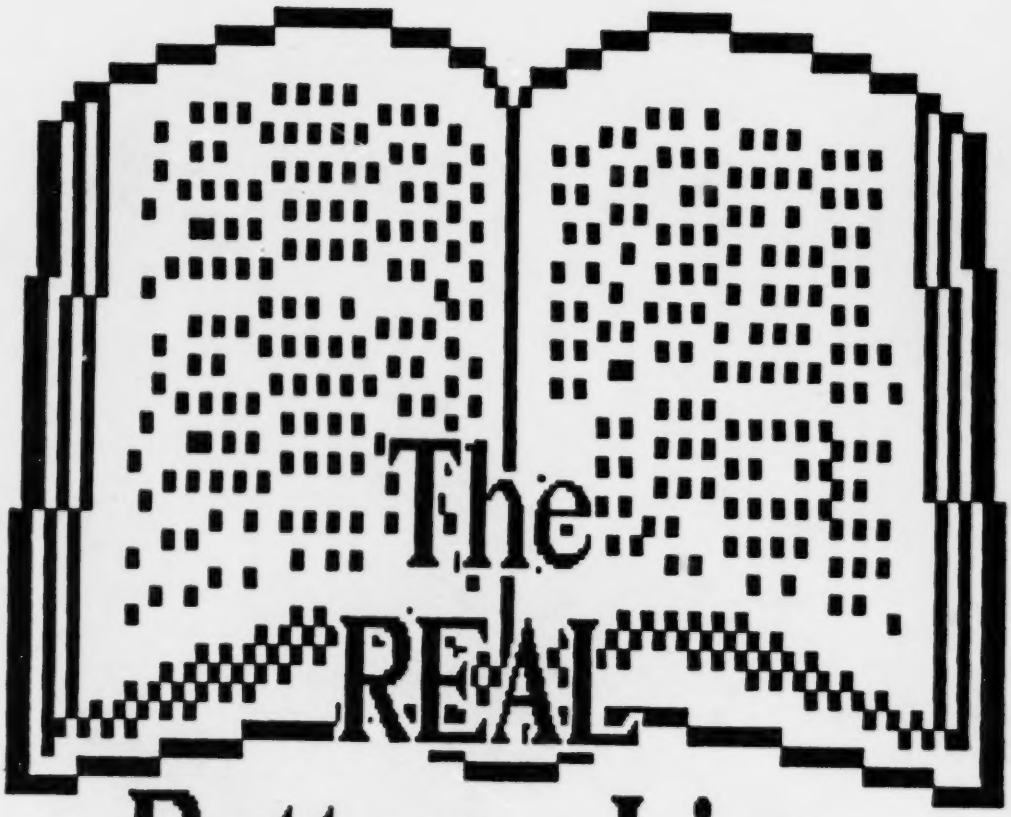
T 7

60% of our high school students read below 9th grade level



T 8

LITERACY



Bottom Line

T 9

Historical Definition of Literacy

1850 - U.S. Census - self-reporting

1900 - Ability to write name

WW II - 4th grade reading level for entrance into Army

T 10

Extra!

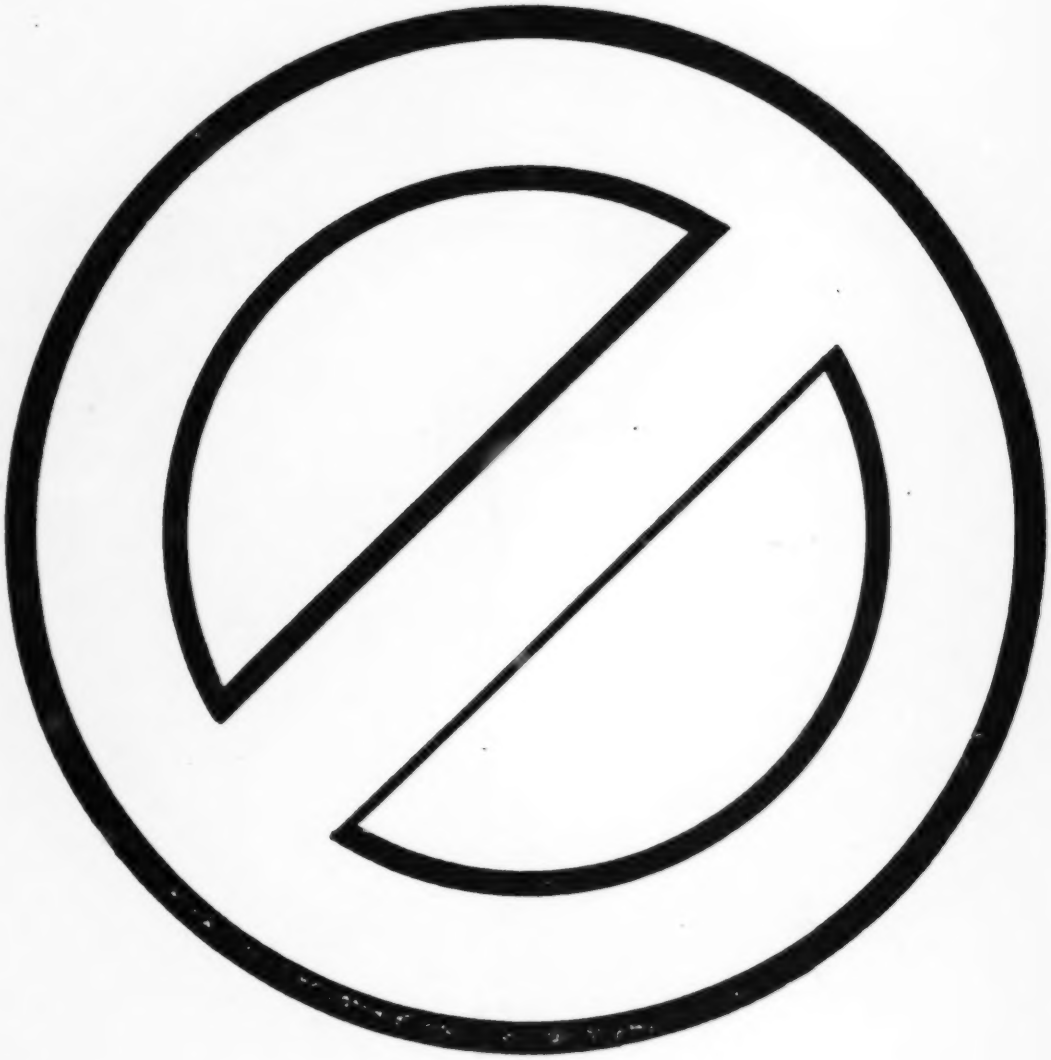
Extra!

Literacy Demands Rising

T 11

Reading
+ Writing
Literacy

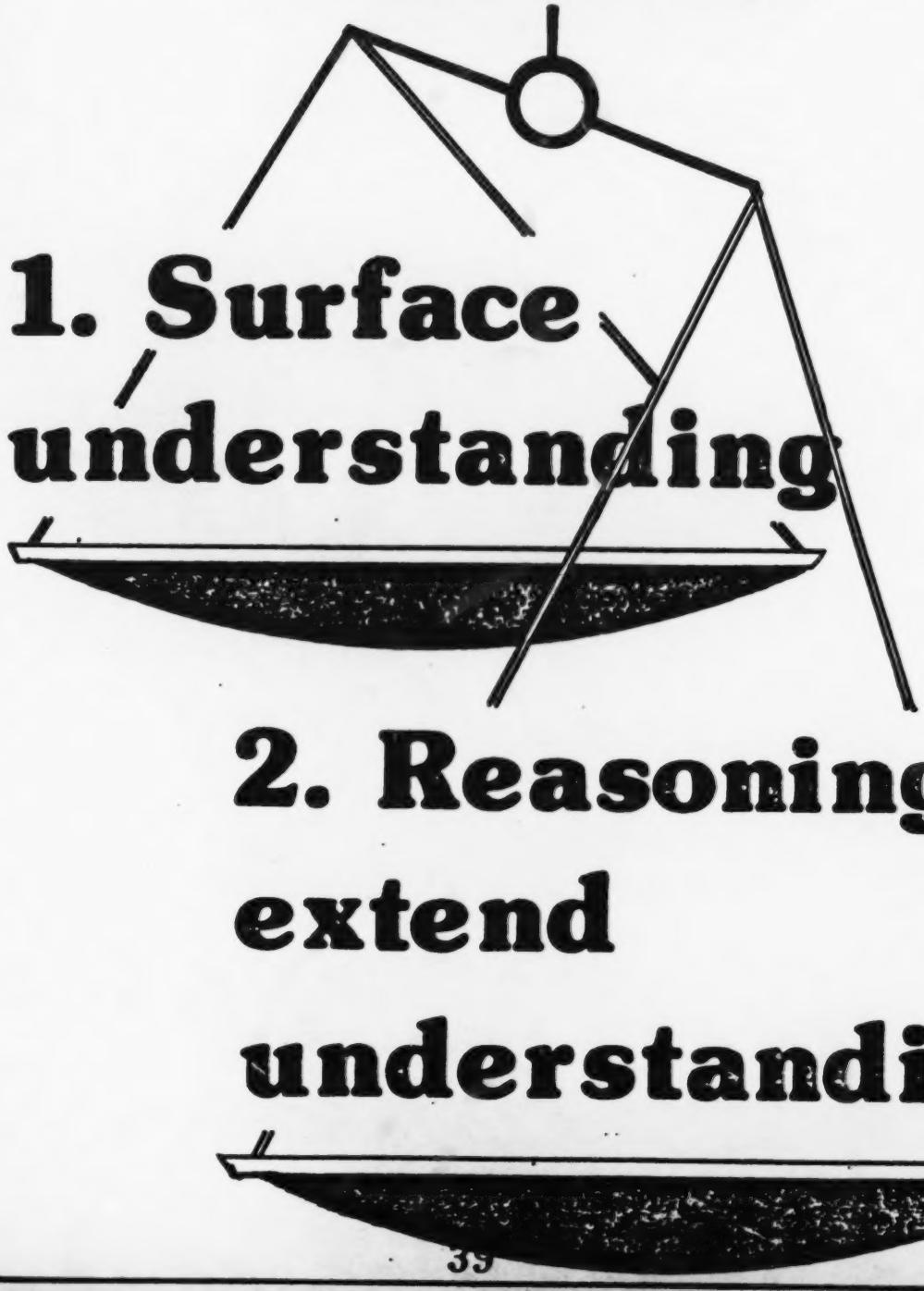
T 12



Emergent Definition of Literacy: "Using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential."

from
Learning To Be
Literate in America T 14

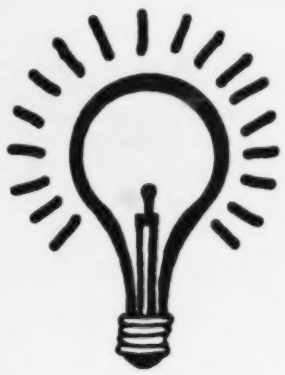
Components of Literacy



T 15

As students
move through
school,
are they
improving
in reading,
writing, and
reasoning ability?

T 16



Good news

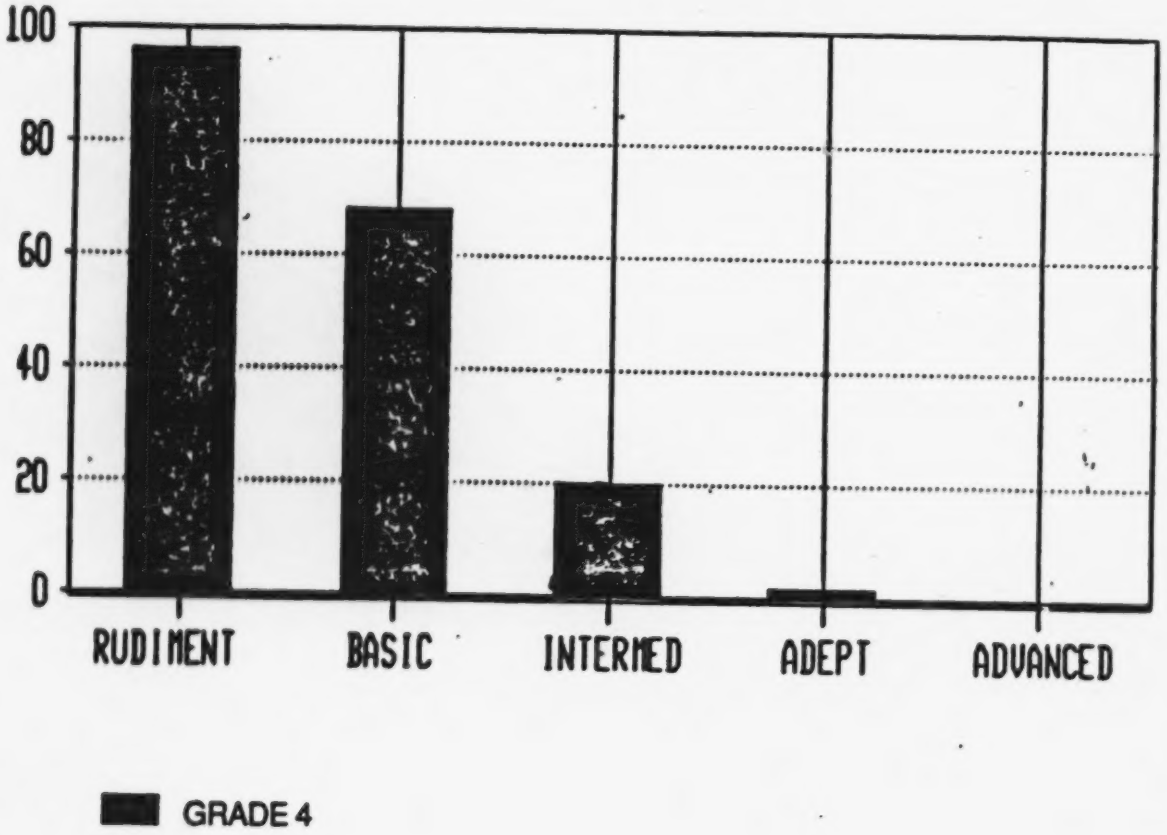
Most can understand what they read and can express thoughts in writing at a surface level.

Bad news

Only a small percent can reason effectively.

NAEP 1986

PERFORMANCE AT FIVE READING LEVELS



Look at the picture and circle the letter beside the sentence that tells BEST what the drawing shows.

A The dog is lying by the doghouse.

(B) The dog is lying on top of the doghouse.

C The dog is lying next to the doghouse.

D The dog is lying inside the doghouse.

E I don't know.

T 19

Here is a puzzle. See if you can solve it.

This is something that usually has four legs and that you can sit on. It can be made of wood or metal. Most people have several of these in their homes. Some are soft, and some are hard. You usually sit on one of these when you sit down to eat.

What is this?

(A) A chair
B A horse
C A pillow
D A mushroom
E I don't know.

T 20

Basic Skills and Strategies

Read the following article and answer the questions based on it.

What Is Quicksand?

Quicksand can swallow a pig, or a human, or even an elephant.

Quicksand often looks like plain wet sand. But it is really a soupy sand with so much water between the grains that you can't stand on it.

If you step into quicksand, you will slowly sink up to your knees. If you thrash and squirm, you will sink deeper and deeper. But if you lie flat on your back with your arms stretched out, you can float on the sand, as you can float in water.

Watch out for quicksand on sand bars, on the bottoms of streams, or along sandy seacoasts.

You can test for quicksand by poking it with a long stick or pole. If the sand shakes and quakes, don't try to walk on it! It may be quicksand.

According to the article, how can you test to see if sand is really quicksand?

A Stick your hand into it.
B Step lightly on it.
(C) Poke it with a stick.
D Look at it.
E I don't know.

What is quicksand?

A Wet sand you can walk on
(B) Soupy sand you can't stand on
C Sand that forms clouds in the wind
D Dry sand which flows quickly through your fingers
E I don't know.

T 21

Basic Skills and Strategies

Read the story below so that you can answer a question about it without looking back at the story.

Timothy wasn't big enough to play ball. In the summer he sat on the steps of his brownstone building and watched things. People washing cars. Children playing games. Teen-agers standing in circles talking about how hot it was. Workers tearing down the building across the street.

DO NOT LOOK BACK!

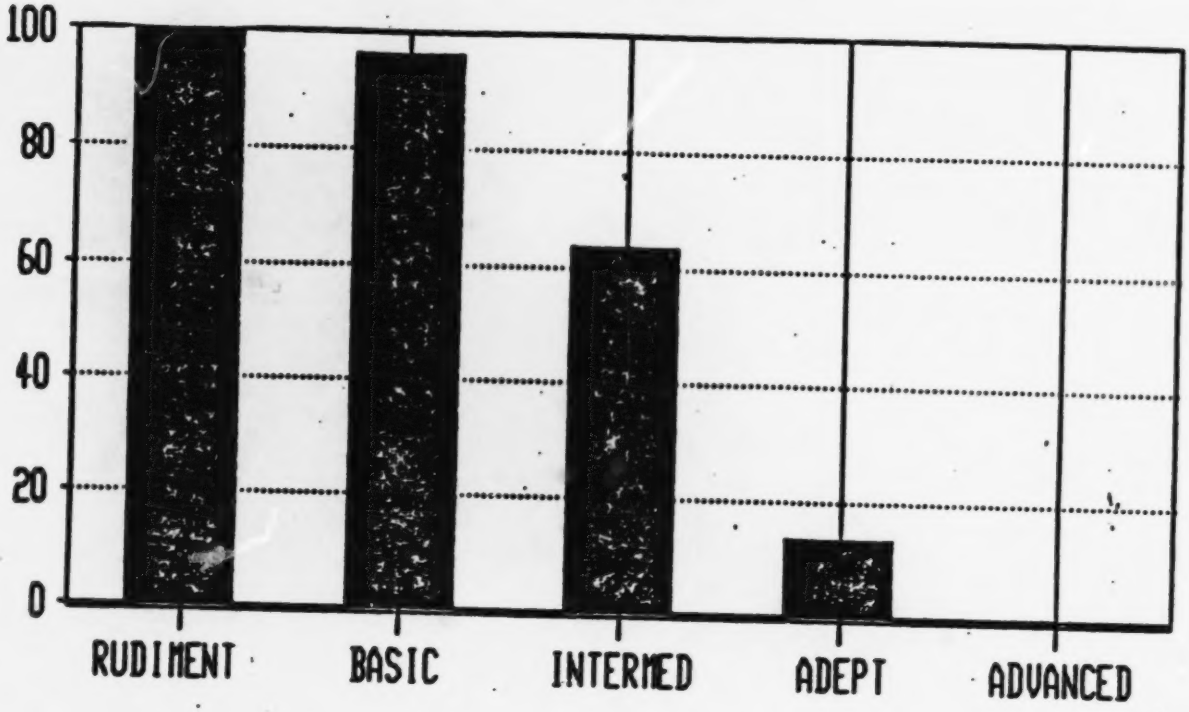
Without looking back at the story, answer the following question.

What were the teen-agers talking about?

A Timothy
B Music
(C) How hot it was
D The people washing cars
E The building across the street
F I don't know.

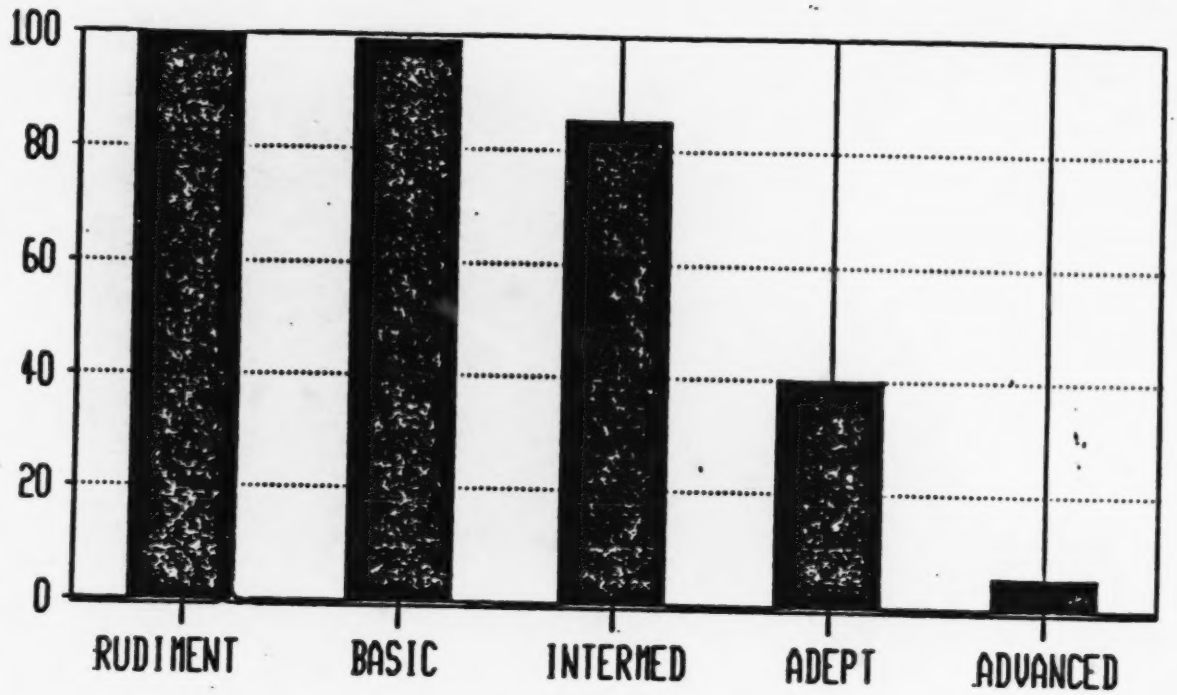
T 22

PERFORMANCE AT FIVE READING LEVELS



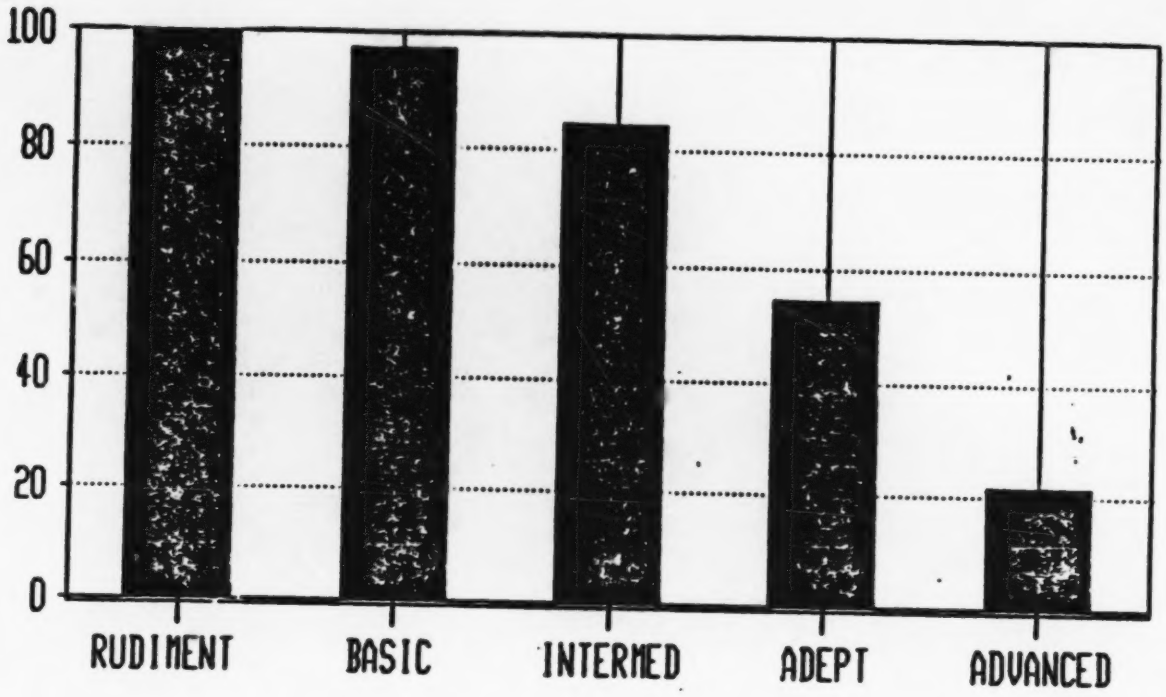
T 23

PERFORMANCE AT FIVE READING LEVELS



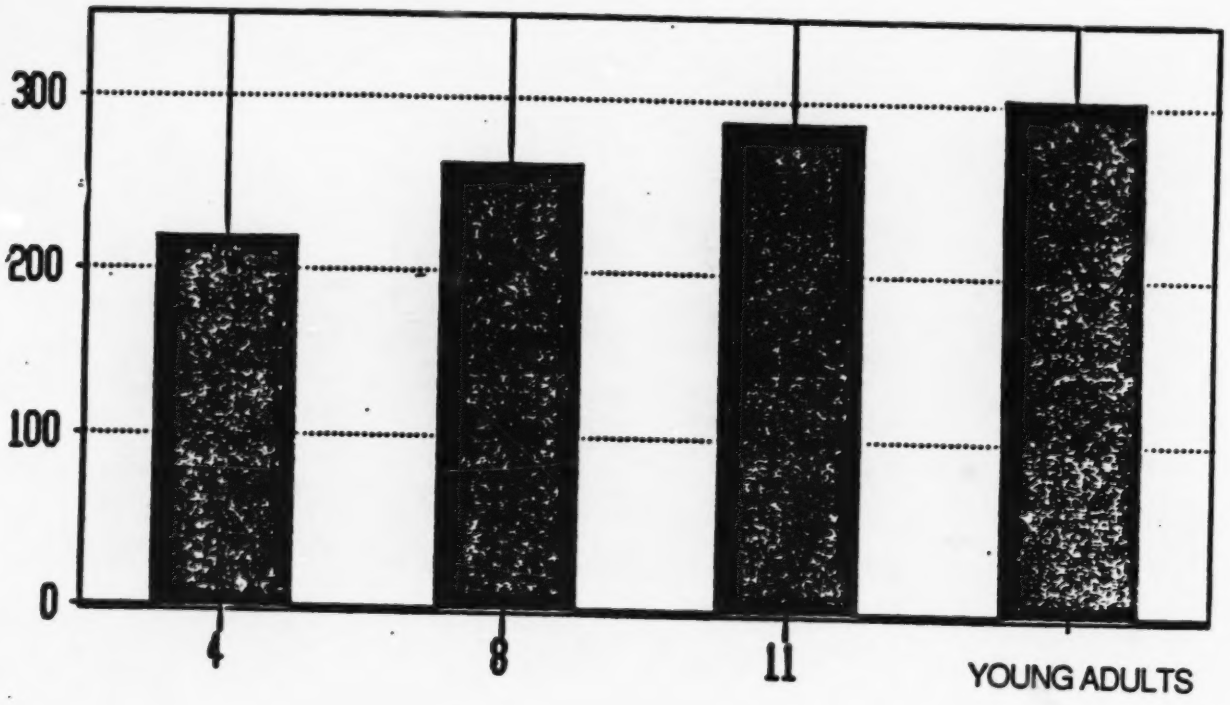
GRADE 11

PERFORMANCE AT FIVE READING LEVELS



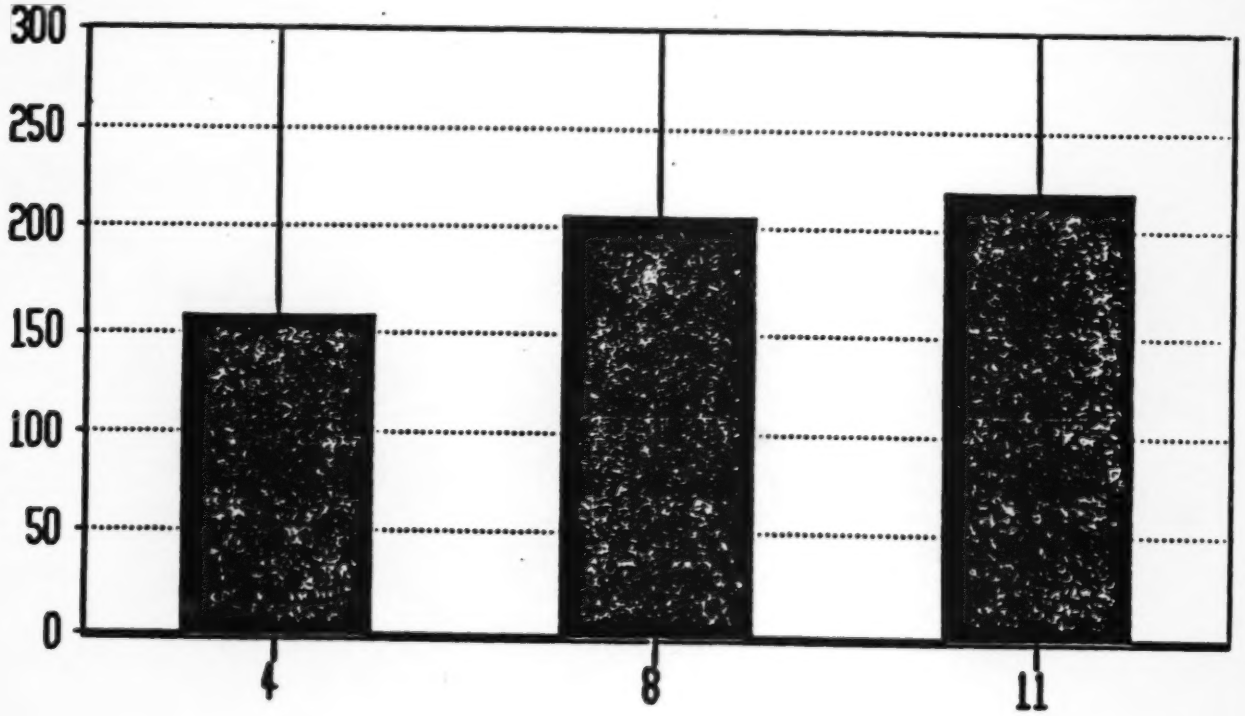
T 25

AVERAGE READING PROFICIENCY



T 26

AVERAGE WRITING ACHIEVEMENT



T 27

Workplace reading

is:

applying information

to solve problems.

Schoolplace reading

is:

recalling information

from a textbook

T 28

Schools

DO

make a difference!

T 29

"The function of education is shifting – from picking winners

to creating winners.

Harold L. Hodgkinson

How might we

create

learning

environments

that

create winners?

T 31

How might we

begin to examine

our

existing

curriculum

to ascertain whether

we are

promoting literacy?

T 32

How might we

develop

new

and

appropriate

indices?

T 33

What you

INSPECT,

you

EXPECT

and

RESPECT.

T 34

Achievement
in
reading
is not merely
a score
on a
standardized
test.

How might we improve in our ability to retain our students to graduation?

T 36

How might we

encourage

high expectations

and

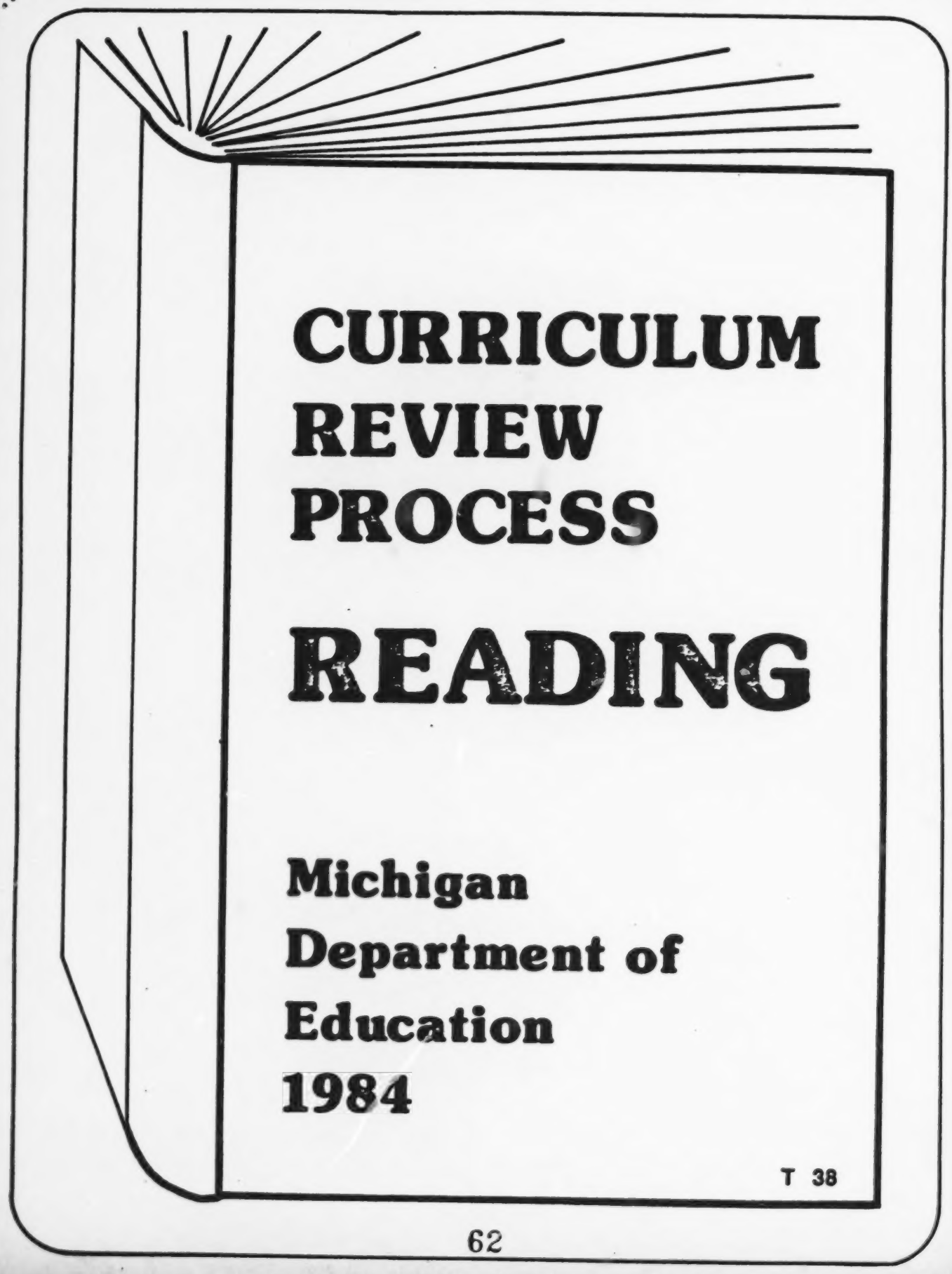
rigorous standards

for

all

students?

T 37

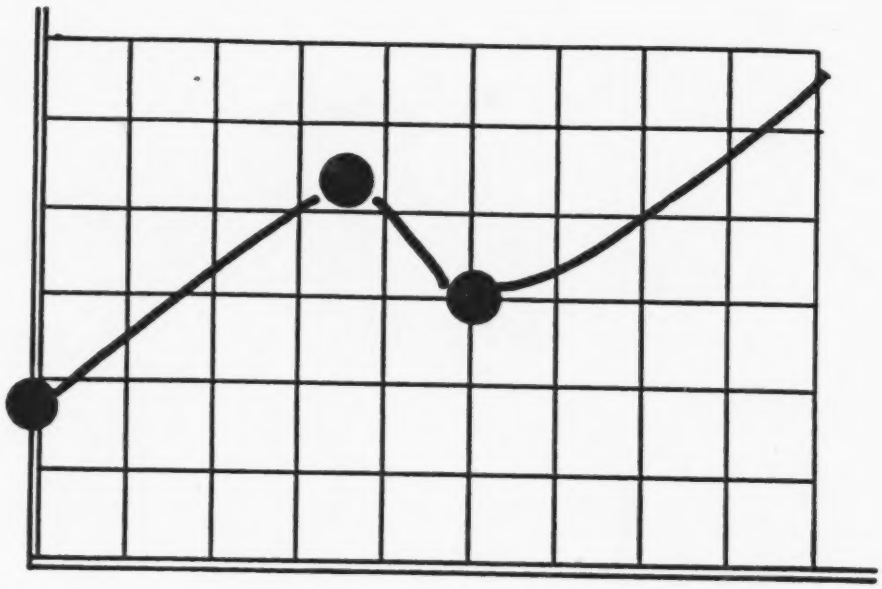


CURRICULUM REVIEW PROCESS

READING

Michigan Department of Education
1984

T 38



Michigan K - 12 Program Standards of Quality

"We are not a nation of careful readers, nor are we highly competent information processors. In an information age, these deficiencies of young adults should be viewed as particularly troublesome."

from
The Subtle Danger T 40